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SMITH MOORE LLP
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OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of :
Mertens et al. :
Application No. 10/721,821 : DECISION GRANTING PETITION
Filed: November 25, 2003 : UNDER 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3)
Attorney Docket No. 5003073-049US1 :

This is a decision on the petitions under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) and 37 CFR 1.55(c), filed July 7, 2004, to accept an unintentionally delayed claim under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 for the benefit of prior-filed PCT Application No. PCT/EP02/05799, filed on May 27, 2002, and under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) for the benefit of a prior-filed foreign application, as set forth in the concurrently filed amendment and ADS, respectively.

The petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) is **GRANTED**.

The petition under 37 CFR 1.55(c) is **DISMISSED AS MOOT**.

A petition for acceptance of a claim for late priority under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) is only applicable to those applications filed on or after November 29, 2000. Further, the petition is appropriate only after the expiration of the period specified in 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii). In addition, the petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) must be accompanied by:

- (1) the reference required by 35 U.S.C. § 120 and 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(i) of the prior-filed application, unless previously submitted;
- (2) the surcharge set forth in § 1.17(t); and
- (3) a statement that the entire delay between the date the claim was due under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii) and the date the claim was filed was unintentional. The Commissioner may require additional information where there is a question whether the delay was unintentional.

The instant pending application was filed on November 25, 2003, and was pending at the time of filing of the instant petition. A reference to the above-noted, prior-filed PCT application has been included in an amendment to the first sentence of the specification following the title, as required by 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(iii).

The instant nonprovisional application was filed after November 29, 2000, and the claim herein for the benefit of priority to the prior-filed PCT application is submitted after expiration of the period specified in 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii). Also, the reference to the prior-filed PCT application was submitted during the pendency of the instant nonprovisional application, for which the claim for benefit of priority is sought. See 35 U.S.C. § 120. Accordingly, having found that the instant petition for acceptance of an

unintentionally delayed claim for the benefit of priority under 35 U.S.C. § 120 to the prior-filed PCT application satisfies the conditions of 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3), the petition is granted.

The granting of the petition to accept the delayed benefit claim to the prior-filed application under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) should not be construed as meaning that the instant application is entitled to the benefit of the prior-filed application. In order for the instant application to be entitled to the benefit of the prior-filed application, all other requirements under 35 U.S.C. § 120 and 37 CFR 1.78(a)(1) and (a)(2) must be met. Similarly, the fact that the corrected Filing Receipt accompanying this decision on petition includes the prior-filed application should not be construed as meaning that applicant is entitled to the claim for benefit of priority to the prior-filed application noted thereon. Accordingly, the examiner will, in due course, consider this benefit claim and determine whether the instant application is entitled to the benefit of the earlier filing date.

The instant petition under 37 CFR 1.55(c) is unnecessary since the claim for foreign priority was timely made in the oath or declaration as required by 37 CFR 1.63(c)(2) and within the time period provided by 37 CFR 1.55(a)(1). The current procedure where a claim for priority under 37 CFR §§ 1.55(a)(1) is not included in the first sentence of the specification or in an ADS but does appear either in the oath or declaration or a transmittal letter filed with the application and the Office notes the claim for priority, no petition will be required to accept a late claim for priority.

A corrected Filing Receipt, which includes the priority claim to the prior-filed PCT application, accompanies this decision on petition.

Any inquiries concerning this decision may be directed to Paralegal Liana Chase at (703) 306-0482 or at (571) 272-3206 after September 28, 2004.

This application is being forwarded to Technology Center Art Unit 1754 for appropriate action on the amendment filed July 7, 2004, including consideration by the examiner of applicant's entitlement to claim benefit of priority under 35 U.S.C. § 120 to the prior-filed PCT application.



Frances Hicks
Petitions Examiner
Office of Petitions
Office of the Deputy Commissioner
for Patent Examination Policy

ATTACHMENT: Corrected Filing Receipt